

# Inspire...



**Awareness:** Folic acid awareness increased in California from 1997 to 2000 (57 percent and 66.2 percent, respectively). Folic acid helps to prevent birth defects.<sup>1</sup>

**Healthy choices:** Compared with older respondents, females 18-24 years of age reported higher rates of tobacco smoking, chronic and acute drinking, and having experienced intimate partner domestic violence.<sup>1</sup>

**Responsibility:** Sixty-nine percent of female adolescents ages 15-17 (69.1%) reported using a condom the last time they had intercourse. This proportion is significantly higher than the minimum proportion of 49% established by Healthy People Objective 9-10.<sup>2</sup>

**Self-discipline:** California has seen a small decline in the prevalence of smoking in women from 16.9 percent in 1997 to 15 percent in 2002.<sup>1</sup>

**Diversity:** In 2004, California was home to 9.5 million foreign-born people, which was 27 percent of the state's population and 27.9 percent of the country's foreign-born population.<sup>3</sup>

**Future leaders:** Women hold only 10.2% of the board seats and executive officer positions in the 400 largest public companies

headquartered in California. For every nine men in the executive suites and boardrooms of these companies, there is only one woman.<sup>4</sup>

**Compassion:** Thirty-six percent of women who are between 18 and 64 years of age in California— 3.7 million — are low income, with family incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This includes 17% of women with family incomes below the poverty level. Women of color are more likely than white women to report their health status as fair or poor.<sup>5</sup>

**Learning:** A college degree reduces the likelihood of poverty by 80 percent, whereas a high school diploma reduces the likelihood of poverty by only 25 percent.<sup>6</sup> Twenty percent of women in California have four or more years of college. California ranks 13th in the nation in the percentage of women with four or more years of college.<sup>7</sup>

**Change:** When women's and men's wages are compared within the same occupation, women earn less. For example, in the U.S. in 2000, women comprised 97.8 percent of all registered nurses yet earned only 88 percent of their male colleagues' wages.<sup>8</sup> In the service sector where nearly 30 percent of all women are employed, the median weekly earnings for women are \$335, while the median weekly earnings for men are \$438.<sup>9</sup>

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“One isn't necessarily born with courage, but *one is born with potential.*

Without *courage*, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can't be *kind, true, merciful, generous, or honest.*”

-*Maya Angelou*

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Health Services, Office of Women's Health. *Women's Health: Findings from the California Women's Health Survey, 1997-2003.*

<sup>2</sup> S Holtby, E Zahnd, N Lordi, C McCain, YJ Chia, JH Kurata. *Health of California's Adults, Adolescents and Children: Findings from CHIS 2003 and CHIS 2001.* Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit. *Current Population Survey Report, March 2004.* May 2005.

<sup>4</sup> 2006 UC Davis Study of California Women Business Leaders

<sup>5</sup> Ojeda, Victoria D., Wyn, Roberta. *Women's Health Issues in California: Findings from the 2001 California health Interview Survey.* Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2003

<sup>6</sup> Robert Buck, "Reauthorizing Welfare Reform: An Examination of Program Outcomes and Policy Issues," (San Diego State University, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Institute for Women's Policy Research. *The Status of Women in California: Politics, Economics, Health, Demographics*, Figure 7 (Washington, D. C.:IWPR, 1996), 21.

<sup>8</sup> Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 20 Leading Occupations of Employed Women 2000 Annual Averages [online] (Washington, D. C., 2000); available from: <[www.dol.gov/dol/wb/public/wb\\_pubs/20lead2000.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/public/wb_pubs/20lead2000.htm)>.

<sup>9</sup> The Women's Foundation. *Failing to Make Ends Meet: a Report on the Economic Status of Women in California.* May 2002